

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) In a distributed system having a publishing master and a client system, a computer implemented method for distributing packages to various computer systems, said method comprising:

providing at the publishing master an index of available packages for loading by the client system, said packages being one of a computer program and a patch for a computer program;

storing at the client system data that identifies packages to which the client system subscribes;

programmatically accessing the index on behalf of the client system to identify at least one selected package for loading at the client system, said selecting using the information identifying packages that may be loaded at the client system, and the data that identifies packages to which the client system subscribes, said programmatic accessing occurring without user-participation; and

loading the selected package at the client system, said package being received from the publishing master in response to a request from said client system.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the selected package is loaded without registration of the client system with the publishing master.

3-4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, comprising the further step of:

storing the selected package at a repository that is separate from the publishing master, said package being retrieved from said repository prior to loading.

6-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Original) The method claim 1 wherein the publishing master is a web server.

9. (Currently Amended) In a distributed system having a server and a client, a computer implemented method for distributing packages to various computer systems, said method comprising:

storing at the server an index~~information~~ identifying packages that may be installed at the client, said packages being one of a computer program and a patch for a computer program;

storing at the client data that identifies packages to which the client subscribes; and

using the ~~information~~index identifying packages that may be installed at the client and the data that identifies packages to which the client subscribes to determine which of the packages are to be installed at the client, said determining comprising generating a list of packages that may be installed at the client to which the client wants to describe and which have not already been installed at the client.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 further comprising installing the determined packages at the client, said package being received from the server in response to a request from said client.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising providing data regarding what packages have already been installed at the client and using the data regarding what packages have already been installed in determining which of the packages are to be installed at the client.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein the ~~information~~index identifying packages that may be installed at the client includes information identifying names and version of the packages.

13. (Cancelled).

14. (Currently Amended) In a computer network having a server and a client, a method comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

(a) providing at the server ~~data~~an index regarding what packages are available for installation, said packages being one of a computer program and a patch for a computer program;

(b) providing at the client an itemization of packages to which the client subscribes; and

- (c) with the client, repeating multiple times the following steps:
 - (i) programmatically accessing the index data regarding what packages are available and accessing the itemization of packages to which the client subscribes to determine what selected packages to install, said programmatic accessing occurring without user-participation; and
 - (ii) installing selected packages at the client, said package being received from the server in response to a request from said client.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein steps (c)(i) and (c)(ii) are repeated at periodic intervals.

16. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein steps (c)(i) and (c)(ii) are repeated upon demand by a user.

17. (Currently Amended) In a distributed system having a publishing master, at least one repository for holding packages and multiple client computer systems, said packages being at least one of a computer program and a patch for a computer program a computer implemented method comprising:

providing a package index at the publishing master, wherein the package index identifies names and versions of packages stored on the repository;

providing a subscription list at each client system, wherein each subscription list identifies the packages to which the client system subscribes; and

for each client system, at periodic intervals:

- (i) programmatically identifying selected packages to be loaded by referencing the package index and the subscription list; said programmatic identifying occurring without user-participation; and
- (ii) loading the selected packages at the client system, said package being received from the publishing master in response to a request from said client system.

18. (Cancelled).

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 wherein at least one of the packages that is loaded includes multiple patches.

20. (Currently Amended) A distributed system, comprising:

a publishing master holding an index of packages that are available for installation, said packages being at least one of a computer program and a patch for a computer program;
a repository for storing the packages that are available for installation; and
a client computer system for identifying selected packages among the packages indexed by the index of packages, obtaining the selected packages from the repository and installing the selected packages at the client computer system said identifying using information from a client-maintained subscription list of packages to which the client computer system subscribes, said obtaining of the selected packages being received from the publishing master occurring in response to a request from said client system.

21. (Cancelled).

22. (Original) The distributed computer system of claim 20 further comprising an additional repository for storing at least a portion of the packages that are available for installation.

23. (Original) The distributed computer system of claim 20 further comprising an additional client computer system for identifying a subset of the packages indexed by the index of packages, obtaining the subset of packages from repository and installing the subset of packages at the additional client computer system.

24-29 (Cancelled).

30. (Withdrawn) In a distributed system having repositories for storing packages, a method comprising:

providing a selected package or multiple repositories;
determining respective response times for the repositories on which the selected package is provided; and
retrieving the selected package from the repository that has the shortest response time.

31. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 30 wherein the determining of respective response times comprises sending a test communication to the repositories on which the selected package is provided and measuring response times to the test communication.

32. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 30 wherein a client system that wishes to retrieve the selected package performs the determining and the retrieving.

33. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 30 wherein the selected package contains computer instructions.

34. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 30 wherein the determining of response times is done when the selected package is to be retrieved.

35-37 (Cancelled)

38. (Currently Amended) In a distributed system having a publishing master with an index of packages available for installation and a client system, said packages being at least one of a computer program and a patch for a computer program, a computer implemented method performed by the client system comprising:

- requesting at least a portion of the index from the publishing master;
- receiving at least a portion of the index from the publishing master in response to the request;
- identifying packages that are already installed at the client;
- processing the received portion of the index to identify a selected package to install; said processing using information about the identified packages already installed on the client system; and
- obtaining a copy of the selected package in response to a request from the client system.

39. (Original) The method of claim 38 further comprising the step of installing the package at the client system.

40. (Original) The method of claim 38 wherein the selected package is obtained without registration of the client system with the publishing master.

41. (Original) The method of claim 38 wherein the selected package contains a patch.

42. (Original) The method of claim 38 wherein the selected package contains a document.

43. (Currently Amended) In a distributed system having a publishing master having an index of packages available for installation and a client system, said packages being at least one of a computer program and a patch for a computer program, a computer-readable medium holding computer-executable instructions for performing a method performed by the client system comprising:

- requesting at least a portion of the index from the publishing master;
- receiving at least a portion of the index from the publishing master in response to the request;
- identifying packages that are already installed at the client;
- processing the received portion of the index to identify a selected package to install; said processing using information about the identified packages already installed on the client; and
- obtaining a copy of the selected package in response to a request from the client.

44. (Original) The storage medium of claim 43 wherein the selected package is obtained without registration of the client system with the publishing master.

45-52. (Cancelled)

53. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said method of selecting a package for loading at the client system comprises the further step of:

- comparing at least one of a version number and a release date for a package to which the client subscribes and which is loaded at the client system to at least one of a version number and a release date of at least one of said packages identified as available for loading at the publishing master.

54. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said method of selecting a package for loading at the client system comprises the further step of:

providing an identifier for each package listed as available for loading at said publishing master, said identifier indicating that an associated package is one of a required update and an optional update, said required update indicated as necessary for one of any client system without said package installed and a client system having one of said package installed bearing an earlier release date and package installed bearing a lower version number, said optional update indicated as necessary for one of any client system subscribing to said package and which does not have said package installed and a client system subscribing to the package and having one of said package installed bearing an earlier release date and package installed bearing a lower version number.

55. (Currently Amended) In a distributed system having a publishing master and a client system, a medium holding computer executable steps for a method, said method comprising:

providing at the publishing master an index of available packages for loading, said packages being one of a computer program and a patch for a computer program;

storing at the client system data that identifies packages to which the client system subscribes;

programmatically accessing the index on behalf of the client system to identify at least one selected package for loading at the client system, said selecting using the information identifying packages that may be loaded at the client system, and the data that identifies packages to which the client system subscribes, said programmatic accessing occurring without user-participation; and

loading the selected package at the client system, said package being received from the publishing master in response to a request.

56. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 55 wherein the selected package is loaded without registration of the client system with the publishing master.

57. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 55 wherein said method of selecting a package for loading at the client system comprises the further step of:

comparing at least one of a version number and a release date for a package to which the client subscribes and which is loaded at the client system to at least one of a version number and

a release date of at least one of said packages identified as available for loading at the publishing master.

58. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 55 wherein said method of selecting a package for loading at the client system comprises the further step of:

providing an identifier for each package listed as available for loading at said publishing master, said identifier indicating that an associated package is one of a required update and an optional update, said required update indicated as necessary for one of any client system without said package installed and a client system having one of said package installed bearing an earlier release date and package installed bearing a lower version number, said optional update indicated as necessary for one of any client system subscribing to said package and which does not have said package installed and a client system subscribing to the package and having one of said package installed bearing an earlier release date and package installed bearing a lower version number.